

Serial No.: 09/521,896
Group Art Unit: 3738
Examiner: S. Jackson

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows. An Appendix of Marked-up Specification is attached.

Page 4, lines 6-31, please amend this paragraph as follows:

As can be seen more clearly in Figures 1 to 4, the subject matter of the invention is a disk prosthesis 1 for implanting as a replacement for a disk between two adjacent cervical vertebrae. The cervical prosthesis 1 of the invention comprises a first plate 2, referred to as a top plate in the example shown, and a second plate 3 referred to as a bottom plate. The plates 2 and 3 are designed to be fixed to adjacent cervical vertebrae and each has a respective outer face 2₁, 3₁ of dimensions that are substantially similar and adapted to fit approximately to the outlines of the surfaces of the associated joint. Each plate 2 and 3 also has a respective inner face 2₂ and 3₂ that extends to face the other interface. The general shape of each of the plates 2 and 3 is that of a rectangular parallelepiped possessing a respective posterior edge 2a, 3a extending at a distance from a respective anterior edge 2b, 3b. The anterior edge 2b, 3b of each plate 2, 3 is connected to the corresponding posterior edge 2a, 3a via two side edges 2c, 3c that are opposite each other. The edges 2a, 2b, 2c, and 3a, 3b, 3c are preferably straight in profile and they are interconnected by rounded corners. The posterior edge 2a, 3a of each plate preferably presents a profile that is convex in a transverse plane T, while the anterior edge 2b, 3b presents a profile that is concave.

Page 4, line 32 through Page 5, line 20, please amend this paragraph as follows:

The cervical prosthesis 1 of the invention also has a ball joint 4 interposed between the two plates 2 and 3 which are mounted in the superposed configuration. The ball joint 4 is constituted by a first insert 5 presenting a spherical cap 6 and by a

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second insert 7 presenting a spherical cup 8 that co-operates with the spherical cap 6. Each insert 5, 7 is designed to be mounted in a housing 11, preferably a blind housing (which refers to a bore with an end which is closed, as shown in Fig. 1), formed from the inside face 2₂, 3₂ of each plate 2 and 3. Each insert 5, 7 is generally circularly symmetrical in shape and possesses a respective base 12, 13 of circular right cross-section, with one of its ends being shaped to present the spherical cap 6 or the spherical cup 8. The right cross-section of the base 12, 13 of each insert 5, 7 is constant, or preferably tapering from the spherical cap 6 or the spherical cup 8. In this preferred embodiment, each reception housing 11 is complementary in shape to the insert 5, 7 so as to enable the inserts 5, 7 to be assembled conically in the plates 2, 3. Naturally, any other type of assembly could be envisaged for the inserts, e.g. by means of adhesive or by means of crimping. In an embodiment, provision might be made to fit a damping element against the end of the blind housing 11 so as to be interposed between the corresponding insert and the plate in order to damp the axial forces acting on the prosthesis.

Page 8, lines 14-27, please amend this paragraph as follows:

As can be seen more clearly in Figures 1 and 4, each plate 2, 3 is provided on its posterior edges 2a, 3a with two positioning holes 22 for the endpieces of a tool that serves to hold both plates simultaneously. It should be observed that in this position, as shown in Figure 1, the plates 2, 3 form an angle in the sagittal plane S to facilitate insertion of the cage into the intersomatic gap. It can be seen that the height h of the prosthesis 1 at its front face as defined by the anterior edges 2b, 3b is smaller than its height H of its rear portion as defined by the posterior edges 2a, 3a. In accordance with a preferred characteristic the positioning holes 22 in any one plate converge on each other so as to facilitate withdrawal of the positioning tool.